

# Information Sharing in Child Protection: Policy Principles

## [Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards](#)<sup>1</sup>

Published on 2004, the [Framework for Standards](#) translates key messages from the [Children's Charter](#) into child protection practice for all practitioners, services and/or agencies, by providing *eight* high level generic practice statements, all supported by additional narrative/text. **Standard 4** relates directly to Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Consent.

***Agencies<sup>2</sup> and professionals<sup>3</sup> share information about children where it is necessary to protect them***

- 1. Professionals discuss any concerns and relevant information about a child or their circumstances with those other professionals or agencies with statutory responsibilities for the protection of children when it is in the child's best interests to do so;***
- 2. The needs of each child are the primary consideration when professionals decide how best to share information. All decisions and reasons for them are recorded;***
- 3. Agencies actively manage and support the sharing of information recognising that confidentiality does not prevent sharing information where a child is in need of protection;***
- 4. Professionals ensure that parents and children are made aware of, and check it is understood, what information:***
  - agencies hold;***
  - how it is stored;***
  - with whom it may be shared; and***
  - under what circumstances information may be shared with others without their consent;***
- 5. Professionals identify what information each child and their parents are content to share freely;***
- 6. Professionals take account of each child and their parent's views when deciding when to share information without their consent and can provide reasons and explain to them when they have shared information without consent; and***
- 7. Agencies and professionals store information securely.***

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<sup>1</sup> [Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards](#) (Scottish Executive 2004)

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this guidance, **Agencies** - is widely defined and interpreted as meaning all services and agencies across the public, private and third/voluntary sectors.

<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this guidance, **Professionals** is widely defined and interpreted as meaning all practitioners, paid or unpaid, working directly with or occasionally with children, young people and their families.